



Washington State Department of Agriculture News Release

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WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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Agriculture Department disciplines pesticide applicators with fines, suspensions

OLYMPIA – The state Department of Agriculture has issued civil penalties totaling \$6,050 against eight pesticide applicators and suspended seven pesticide applicator licenses for a total of 105 days. For the first nine months of the year, violations include failing to follow directions on the label, allowing pesticide to drift onto a person or property, and issuing a faulty home inspection report for wood destroying organisms.

The Department of Agriculture enforces state and federal pesticide laws to protect people, property, animals and the environment against the improper use of pesticides. Pesticide Management Division personnel also license structural pest inspectors. The agency conducts about 200 investigations a year involving possible improper distribution or misuse of pesticides or faulty structural pest inspections. Personnel provide technical assistance to the pesticide industry and to consumers.

To file a complaint involving the potential misuse of a pesticide, or to assure that an applicator is properly licensed, call the Department of Agriculture toll-free at (877) 301-4555.

David P. Holcomb, a licensed private applicator in Wenatchee, paid a \$700 civil penalty and his private applicator license was suspended for 10 days. While applying an insecticide in 1999 to a ½-acre block of cherries, spray drifted to a neighboring cherry orchard, exposing a person who was harvesting cherries. He applied pesticides contrary to label directions and operated in a faulty, careless or negligent manner.

Robert T. Flynn, a formerly licensed commercial pest control consultant with Shamrock Home and Pest Inspection, was assessed a \$3,000 civil penalty and a license suspension of 60 days. In 1999, Flynn issued a Final Wood Destroying Organism inspection report on a house in Spanaway. The report indicated that he did not find any visible evidence of active pests or conditions conducive to them. A Department of Agriculture investigation documented evidence to the contrary. Flynn's inspection report was inadequate.

Randy D. Newman, a licensed private applicator, was assessed a \$350 civil penalty and a 15 day license suspension. In 1999, Newman supervised an unlicensed person making an application of a mixture of pesticides to a two-acre apple orchard in Yakima. Conditions were windy and the spray drifted, exposing a person in a neighbor's yard. He did not follow label directions and was found to have operated in a faulty, careless or negligent manner.

Juan Torres, a licensed private applicator, was assessed a \$750 civil penalty. In 1999, Torres supervised his employee in the application of an insecticide to his 10-acre apple orchard in Yakima County. The spray drifted, exposing two persons in their yard. He failed to follow pesticide label directions and did not provide adequate supervision of the application by his employee.

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Patrick E. Harrison, a commercial pesticide operator for Hieb Spraying, Inc., was assessed a six day license suspension. In 1999, Harrison applied an herbicide onto some 37 acres of potatoes in Franklin County. The spray drifted, damaging alfalfa in adjacent irrigation circles. He applied the herbicide inconsistent with label and in a manner that damaged plants.

Jorn Tronstad, a commercial pesticide applicator for Valley Air Service, paid a \$500 civil penalty and was assessed a three day license suspension. In 1999, Tronstad applied a mix of pesticides onto 772 acres of wheat in Klickitat County. The application was made at wind speeds of 12 to 16 miles per hour, causing the pesticide mix to drift off-target onto sensitive ornamental and garden plants of a neighbor. In addition to violating label requirements, he kept inadequate application records.

A. Nicole Wilkens, a formerly licensed commercial operator for Heritage Professional Landscaping, Inc., was assessed a \$500 civil penalty and a six day license suspension. In 1999, Wilkens applied a mix of herbicides in Kennewick within the dripline of ornamental plants and recommended no watering within 24 to 36 hours of the application. The herbicide label requires a 48 hour wait before watering. The ornamental plants were killed or damaged. She applied pesticides contrary to label requirements and operated in a faulty, careless or negligent manner.

Walter T. Scheller, a licensed private applicator, paid a \$250 civil penalty and was assessed a five day license suspension. In 1999, Scheller applied a pesticide to a one-acre cherry orchard near East Wenatchee. The spray drifted, exposing a neighbor while she was working in her front yard. He failed to follow the label and allowed spray to drift onto a person.

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